

13 May 1958

MEMORANDUM FOR: Deputy Director/Intelligence

THROUGH: Assistant Director, Research and Reports

SUBJECT: Trip Report [REDACTED]

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I. Purpose

The trip was designed to provide area familiarization in Ethiopia, Somalia, and southern Sudan, with lighter coverage of other parts of East Africa as time and opportunity permitted. Particular attention was given to acquiring a background for assessing the feasibility of UW-type activities in these areas.

II. Activities and Findings

A. For maximum mobility and observation the trip was planned to begin in the dry season and continue into the early part of the rainy season. Consequently I departed Washington on 30 January 1958 and returned on 30 April 1958. The general plan was to base myself for a period of three to four weeks each, in Addis Ababa, Mogadisho, and Khartoum, in that order. While I was enroute from Washington to Addis Ababa the Mogadisho consulate cabled Washington and Addis Ababa that much of Somalia was unsafe for travel and that I should avoid it completely. It was therefore covered only by one overflight as were British Somaliland, Kenya, and Uganda. On these flights the utter unsuitability of British Somaliland, Somalia, and eastern Kenya for white occupancy was obvious from the barrenness of the country, lack of communications, and the small native population. Somalia in particular approaches the classification of "hell hole" with its heat, humidity, stagnant pools of scum-covered water, wells that produce a wheel spoke pattern of trails because of their importance, lack of vegetative cover, and very thin human and animal population. In these three countries any advance party must plan on being entirely self-sufficient.

B. The tremendous size of Ethiopia (800 x 900 miles) made it necessary to accomplish most of the travel by air, but land or water transportation was used at the peripheral end of each flight.

United States aid to Ethiopia is still called "Point Four" throughout the country and the large number of Americans seem to be well liked by the natives. The Ethiopian is an extremely mild, uneducated and unimaginative person who leads a humdrum life but he seems to be willing to accept the American way rather wholeheartedly. At the experimental clinic and medical school in Gondar I saw sick natives who had walked as much as ten days to reach the clinic, after having been treated by witch doctors for years. But education of the masses and the presence of trained personnel will not solve the problems of strengthening the economy and solidifying the nation. It needs the desire to improve, a concept of administration as a necessary function, and a common language.

The United Nation and United States government employees in the Point Four program in Ethiopia seemed to be a fine group of dedicated and near-dedicated people. The medical and agricultural programs impressed me as being practical and fundamental, emphasizing basic needs such as water and sanitation, and the dignity of work with the hands. However, a problem had developed in relation to Oklahoma A and M contract employees in agriculture and mapping. According to US government personnel the Oklahoma employees were letting personal interests interfere with their work to an extent that seriously impaired their portion of the program. The recent arrival of a new Oklahoma supervisor, a mature person with no axe to grind, has begun to ease the situation. The mapping Institute is slowly gaining strength after a change of personnel about a year ago.

Traveling approximately 2400 miles by air, 900 miles by land, and 50 miles by water has produced an understanding of how the people live and react to foreigners, their degree of sophistication, the possibility of living off the country, the opportunities for concealment and transportation, the fatigue that attends heavy exercise between 6000 and 8000 feet above sea level, and the ease of communicating without benefit of a common language.

C. In Sudan the principal and most rewarding activity was a three-week trip by pick-up truck that covered 2000 miles in Equatoria and Bahr-el-Ghazal, the two southernmost provinces. A conference was held with one or more of the leading local officials every day of the three weeks and produced an excellent impression of the way southerners live and think and of the complete schism between North and South. Short walks into the bush and dozens of meetings with illiterate natives checked out the statements made by their officials.

This trek was followed immediately by a 500 mile boat trip from Juba through the enormous papyrus swamp known as the Sudd, to Malakal, Upper Nile Province. A four-day weather-enforced layover in Malakal was used for a trip 60 miles to the east, inspection of the local power and water plants, casual observation of the Egyptian community facilities, and discussions with local officials, missionaries, and airport personnel.

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economic affairs was supplied with the conclusions and recommendations in the as-yet-unsubmitted report of the Dutch rice specialist whose two year government contract was near an end. The Embassy at Addis Ababa had requested of me and received an appraisal of the road from Malakal eastward to Gambela, Ethiopia.

A total of 400 pages of notes (5 x 8") were taken enroute and 580 pictures were taken and documented at the time.

III. Problems or Difficulties

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Washington, the day before departure, the Department disapproved the trip, changed to probable approval in the afternoon, and withheld approval until three hours before plane time (1350) on the day of departure.

The misunderstanding between the Department of State and the American Embassy at Addis Ababa, and the resulting last minute uncertainty about approval and date of departure, arose chiefly because of lack of

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IV. Commitments --- No commitments were made.

V. Recommendations --- None 25X1A9a

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